

Message Text

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42

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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INFO USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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EO 11652: NA

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SUBJ: AUSTRIAN-IRAQI TALKS ON OIL AND TRADE

SUMMARY: AUSTRIAN TRADE MINISTER VISITED IRAQ IN NOVEMBER TO DISCUSS CLOSER ECONOMIC TIES. REPORTEDLY IRAQ, AUSTRIA'S MAJOR SUPPLIER OF IMPORTED CRUDE, PROVIDED ASSURANCES ON CONTINUED SUPPLY OF OIL TO AUSTRIA ON LONG-TERM BASIS.

1. AUSTRIAN DELEGATION HEADED BY TRADE MINISTER STARIBACHER VISITED IRAQ NOV 12-16 FOR TALKS ON CLOSER ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. MEETINGS HELD IN CONTEXT OF FIRST SESSION OF JOINT AUSTRO-IRAQI COMMISSION. SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG REPORTS THAT PROTOCOL WAS SIGNED UNDER WHICH QUOTE IRAQ WILL SUPPLY AUSTRIA ON A LONG-TERM BASIS WITH THE NECESSARY QUANTITIES OF OIL UNDER CONDITIONS YET TO BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN IRAQI AGENCIES AND THE AUSTRIAN OIL ADMINISTRATION (OMV) UNQUOTE. PROTOCOL ALSO PRO-

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VIDES THAT AUSTRIA WILL FACILITATE EXPORT FINANCING FOR AUSTRIAN

PRODUCTS AND PROVIDE TECHNICAL EXPERTS TO IRAQ. AUSTRIANS SUBMITTED LISTS OF SPECIFIC PROJECT AND EXPORT PROPOSALS. LATTER INCLUDED LUMBER, TRACTORS AND TRUCKS.

2. TRADE MINISTER STARIBACHER DECLARED IN A PRESS CONFERENCE ON HIS RETURN TO VIENNA THAT IRAQ ESTEEMS AUSTRIA AS A NEUTRAL STATE AND VALUES ITS CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA. NEXT MEETING OF AUSTRO-IRAQI COMMISSION WILL BE IN VIENNA NEXT YEAR.

3. COMMENT: IRAQ IS AUSTRIA'S MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE SUPPLIER OF IMPORTED CRUDE OIL. CRUDE IMPORTS FROM IRAQ AMOUNTED TO 2.5 MILLION METRIC TONS, OR 42 PERCENT OF TOTAL CRUDE IMPORTS IN 1973. (OTHER MAJOR SOURCES WITH PERCENTAGE OF IMPORTS IN 1973: IRAN - 19 PERCENT; USSR - 16 PERCENT; LIBYA - 9 PERCENT ; SAUDI ARABIA - 5 PERCENT.) DUE MAINLY TO INCREASED PRICES FOR CRUDE OIL, AUSTRIA'S TRADE DEFICIT WITH IRAQ INCREASED FROM 28 MILLION US DOLLARS IN FIRST HALF OF 1973 TO \$195 MILLION IN FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1974. AUSTRIANS HOPE TO INCREASE EXPORTS TO IRAQ TO OFFSET THIS DEFICIT. STARIBACHER'S VISIT TO IRAQ IS LATEST IN SERIES OF HIGH-LEVEL CONTACTS TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH NEAR EASTERN STATES. HUMES

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